



Testing Times

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Airbags and Warning Lights

VSI 26 requires that the airbag warning lamp must function. Why so, when airbags and the warning lamp are not mandatory fittings in the ADRs?

ADR 69 and 72 require cars to provide minimum levels of occupant protection in frontal and side impact crashes. Some vehicles can meet these requirements without airbags while others must have airbags to do so. Even some of those vehicles with airbags may meet the requirements without the airbag(s) but only the manufacturers know for sure and they are not telling.

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Therefore, wherever an airbag is provided as standard it must remain in place and functional to be certain that the vehicle continues to comply with the ADRs.

Replacing deployed airbags or failed airbag modules is not cheap and some people would like to avoid this despite the risks involved particularly if they on sell the vehicle. If the airbag is faulty or has been removed the warning light will light up and stay lit whenever the ignition is on.



However, the owner or an unscrupulous repairer may simply remove the globe or even more sneakily, replace it with a blown globe. The only way you can be reasonably certain that the airbag is still fitted and will work when needed is to ensure that the airbag warning light comes on when the ignition is first switched on and then goes off after a short system check period.

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